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Improving Intelligence Services

It is constantly necessary for the United States to keep informed of what is going on in the world, and the intelligence services are assigned the function of finding and bringing in the data which is so vitally important.

To improve the calibre of the work being done, and to reassess the costs, President Richard M. Nixon has stepped up the authority of Richard Helms, director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), to do a thorough job of reorganizing.

Helms is excellently suited to do this. He is highly regarded on all sides in Washington. He can handle the mission assigned him.

The average citizen sometimes finds it hard to see why intelligence services are needed. He does not cotton to the idea of "spying." But once he stops to think about it, he can understand it. So many things are happening in the world today — actions, events, battles of opinion within nations, and policy decisions to name only a few—that a free nation needs all the information it can get if it is to chart its own course.

Obtaining such information is not easy, nor is it conventional. Intelligence can include such diverse operations as posting a sentry on a hill in South Vietnam, to cracking codes, to sending satellites flying around the globe in space.

We hope that Helms, in studying all the intelligence agencies of the nation, will find ways to step up their ability to perform, plus the facilitating of analysis that leads to conclusions from facts and appearances assembled.

We hope also that diversity of services will not be lost, in the course of increasing of coordination.

Helms has called intelligence "all the things which should be known in advance of initiating action." There are three major steps involved—acquiring the information; analyzing it, and using it. Helms has the job of improving at least the first two.

President Nixon figures Helms can cut \$1 billion from the cost. The appointment fits in with proper government purpose—to improve service, while cutting down on bureaucracy, and lessening cost to the taxpayer.

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STATINTL

U.S. Is No Police State

A number of persons — including high-ranking members of Congress who should know better — are making allegations today that the U.S. is a police state, and that government agencies are collecting data on citizens for repressive purposes.

If this were really a police state, no person could make such claims. He would be clapped in prison immediately, and probably removed permanently from the scene.

But some Congressional leaders, especially those with aspirations for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1972, have made noisy charges about surveillance, and about the agencies which are set up for the security of the country, both internally and externally.

President Richard M. Nixon, in the interview conducted with six top U.S. editors Friday night, effectively answered the loose charges.

America is no police state, he told the editors and the nation. He has been in a police state, he said, and it can be added that any American who has been in a police state can immediately testify to the differences.

Mr. Nixon also defended J. Edgar Hoover, director of the FBI, who has been under heavy attack from some Senators. Mr. Nixon termed the criticism of the FBI head as "unfair and malicious."

The President outlined the number of wiretaps being made by the FBI for national security purposes, and said that there were fewer in the past two years

than under the Johnson administration. Others, he said, were made with court permission, with a large percentage for the fight on drugs.

Earlier in the week, the head of the CIA, Richard Helms, spoke to the editors' convention and effectively answered charges made against his organization. The CIA, he asserted, is not the "invisible government" that its foes say it is.

"In short," he said, "the Central Intelligence Agency is not and cannot be its own master. It is the servant of the United States government, undertaking what that government asks it to do, under the direction and controls the government has established. We make no foreign policy."

The FBI is the internal watchdog, and in these days when cranks can dream up new ways to plant bombs, and fomentors of violence want no restraints on their subversive activities, the FBI is sorely needed. The CIA is our external watchdog, and as Helms pointed out, we need its intelligence as much for waging peace as for conducting military operations.

It would be unthinkable to try to operate a government without the FBI or the CIA—as agencies of the government, responsible to government. That does not mean they can ever evade their responsibility to be responsive. But any move that weakens their standing, and hampers their work, can have critical effects on the future of the nation.